COELOPHORA VERANIOIDES BLACKBURN: A VARIETY OF *COELOPHORA INAEQUALIS* (F.) (COLEOPTERA: COCCINELLIDAE)

By Dinah F. Hales
School of Biological Sciences, Macquarie University, North Ryde, N.S.W. 2113.

Abstract

Crosses between the coccinellids *Coelophora veranioides* Blackburn and *Coelophora inaequalis* (F.) produce fertile progeny of both colour patterns. *C. veranioides* should be considered as a variety of *C. inaequalis*. *Coelophora ripponi*, *Coelophora mastersi* and *Coccinella religiosa* should also be treated as varieties of *C. inaequalis*.

In recent studies of native aphid populations, the author has collected a number of aphid predators, including various coccinellids. The latter included specimens identified by Dr E. B. Britton as *Coelophora inaequalis* (F.) and *Coelophora veranioides* Blackburn. Subsequently a pair was taken *in copula* (Mosman, N.S.W., 2 Feb. 1975); the male corresponded to the *C. inaequalis* elytral pattern (Fig. 1) and the female to the *C. veranioides* pattern (Fig. 2). Both elytral patterns were present among the progeny of this female. A number of controlled crosses were carried out between the two forms and all resulted in the production of fertile progeny.

1.

2.

FIGS 1-2. (1) *Coelophora inaequalis*; (2) *C. inaequalis* var. *veranioides*.

C. veranioides can therefore no longer be considered as a separate species. *C. inaequalis* is already known to be a very variable species, and a number of varieties have been named. Specimens agreeing with the description of *C. veranioides* could be distinguished as *C. inaequalis* var. *veranioides*. As mentioned in the original description (Blackburn, 1894), the longitudinal stripe on each elytron (Fig. 2) is sometimes broken in the middle. No characteristics were found for distinguishing between *C. inaequalis* var. *veranioides* and standard *C. inaequalis* in the larval and pupal stages.

Britton (personal communication) considers that *Coelophora ripponi* Crotch, 1874 is the same as *C. inaequalis* var. *veranioides*, differing only in

having the longitudinal stripe slightly thicker, and in addition, that *Coccinella religiosa* Lea, 1901 is a synonym of *Coelophora inaequalis* var. *novemmaculata* (F.). Timberlake (1922) reared an all-black variety of *C. inaequalis*; this suggests that the black species *C. mastersi* Blackburn, 1892 may also be a synonym of *C. inaequalis.*

Coelophora inaequalis is widely distributed in Australia and Asia, and has been imported into Hawaii. Specimens in the Australian Museum and Australian National Insect Collection indicate that *C. inaequalis* var. *veranioides* occurs throughout the coast and mountain regions of eastern Australia.

The inheritance of the elytral pattern of *C. inaequalis* var. *veranioides* is described elsewhere (Hales, 1976).

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Compiled by M. S. Moulds
14 Chisholm St, Greenwich, N.S.W. 2065, Australia

This bibliography lists, in an accumulative manner, all literature published since the beginning of 1972 that directly concerns Australian insects. It attempts to fulfil the need for a comprehensive list of current Australian entomological literature. If you have published anything likely to be overlooked I would be greatful for reprints or details of such publications.

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